

37. (New) The method according to claim 29 or 30, wherein said coating film enhances sustained release.

38. (New) A compressed tablet produced by the process according to any of claims 29-32.

39. (New) A compressed tablet produced by the process according to claim 33.

40. (New) A compressed tablet produced by the process according to claim 34.

41. (New) A compressed tablet produced by the process according to claim 35.

REMARKS

Pending claims 1-28 are cancelled and replaced by new claims 29-41 in order to recite the present invention with the specificity required by statute and better distinguish the prior art. The subject matter of the amendment may be found in the specification as filed, inter alia at page 17, line 21 to page 19, line 2, and page 21, lines 4-13. Accordingly, no new matter has been added.

Previously, claims 22 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. These claims are now cancelled and, accordingly, these rejections are overcome.

Claims 15-20, 22-24, and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsushima (US 6,036,974). The Examiner stated that Tsushima teaches a method for preparation of molded tablet comprising spray coat of lubricant to the punch. The tableting mixture comprising of medicines, binder, excipient, and wetting agent. The lubricant to be coated on the surface of the tablet comprising magnesium stearate or talc. Moreover, the Examiner states that the dividing grooved and marking lines, etc., or scored tables are well known in the art.

However, Tsushima neither teaches nor suggests a process or a tablet including granules containing active substance and diluting agent, wherein lubricant is provided only on the surface thereof and wherein the granules are coated with a coating film (claim 29), or wherein the active substance is embedded within a base matrix which is insoluble in water or a hydrophobic high molecular material (claim 31).

Claims 1-14 and 25-28 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsushima taken with Morimoto (EP 650826). The Examiner acknowledged that Tsushima does not teach spraying chamber but relied on Morimoto for this feature. However, Morimoto does not remedy the deficiencies of Tsushima discussed above.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that all of the Examiner's concerns are now overcome and the claims are now in allowable condition. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of this application is earnestly solicited.

Claims 29-39 remain presented for continued prosecution.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lawrence S. Perry", is written over a horizontal line.

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